



29 March 2007

### Death of a US Servicemember

1. Yesterday, we experienced the unexpected death of a Soldier who has been in the Army almost eight years and assigned to Korea the last two years. This soldier was due to PCS this summer. He was found dead in his barracks room by his squad leader. The loss of any life, whether a US Servicemember, civilian employee, invited contractor, or family member, is a tragedy.

2. An investigation has been initiated. We may never know whether this death could have been prevented with intervention; however, it is important now to review some basic leadership procedures and emphasize wellness issues.

- Commanders and leaders must stay involved; this is especially critical as we have thousands of Servicemembers deployed to Korea for RSOI. Be a leader and get involved with your people now. It is essential that the “battle buddy” and “combat wingman” concept is alive and well in every USFK formation. Refer to our [USFK Policy Letter #6, Buddy System](#).

- Many of our Servicemembers serving in Korea are separated from loved ones. Extended periods of separation can lead to depression, alcohol and substance abuse, and suicide. Commanders, supervisors and our personnel at all levels need to be alert to indicators of depression and take action to save a life. Unit chaplains are one of our most valuable resources on wellness issues. They should be known and called upon frequently to assist the command and individuals with wellness issues and to intervene in crisis situations.

3. The loss of this Soldier is a tragedy. Whether you are a Servicemember, civilian employee, invited contractor, or family member—you are our most valuable resource. Take care of each other and intervene! You can save a life.

B. B. BELL  
General, US Army  
Commander

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**FREEDOM'S FRONTIER!**